

Unit 2: Historical Overview

Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will

Be Aware of the following

- Tradition of Russia's acceptance of Eastern Orthodoxy
- Impact of Orthodox Eastern Christianity on early Russia
- Influence of Mongol invasion on medieval Russia
- Ivan III, the Great's, rule and founding of the second Russian state
- Events leading to the establishment of the Romanov dynasty
- Peter the Great's policies of opening Russia to the West
- Catherine the Great's expansionist and Russification policies
- Military accomplishments of General Alexander Suvorov
- Repressive measures of Nicholas I
- Events leading to abdication of Tzar Nicholas II
- Communist party establishment in Russia
- Aspects of Stalin's rule prior to World War II
- Siege of Leningrad, Battles of Stalingrad and Kursk
- Reforms under Gorbachev
- Events leading to the fall of Communism in Russia
- Turmoil present since the founding of the Russian Federation

Identify

- Varangians, Prince Rurik, Boyars, Vladimir I
- Cyrillic alphabet, Mongols, Kremlin
- Ivan the Great; tzar; Third Rome; Ivan IV, the Dread

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- Time of Troubles, Boris Godunov, Mikhail Romanov
- Serf, Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, Russification, Crimea, General Alexander Suvorov
- Nicholas I, the Iron Tzar
- Pogrom, Tzar Nicholas II, Bloody Sunday, Duma
- Gregory Rasputin, Petrograd, proletariat
- Vladimir Lenin, October Revolution, Bolsheviks
- Red Guards and White Army
- Politburo, Leon Trotsky, Joseph Stalin
- Great Terror
- Great Patriotic War, General Georgii Zhukov
- Nikita Khrushchev, Warsaw Pact
- Detente, Leonid Brezhnev, Mikhail Gorbachev
- Perestroika, Glasnost
- Conventional Forces in Europe Agreement
- Boris Yeltsin, Chernobyl
- Commonwealth of Independent States
- Russian Federation, Chechnya, Grozny

Realize

- Russian Orthodoxy often strengthened the power of temporal rulers
- Tyrannical policies of Ivan IV, the Dread, especially after the death of his wife
- Reforms, foreign policy and establishment of St. Petersburg under Peter the Great
- Unrest, reforms and impact of World War I during Tzar Nicholas II's rule
- Aspects of Communist class struggle theory
- Different approaches to Communist practice - Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky
- Events surrounding establishment of NATO
- Ups and downs of Boris Yeltsin's presidency

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"If we hope to understand anything of this extraordinary country's present and possible future, it is of great importance to delve, as far as we may, into her past."

-- Edward Rutherford, Russka, The Novel of Russia

"You must know that there is nothing higher and stronger and more wholesome and good for life in the future than some good memory, especially a memory of childhood, of home."

-- Fyodor Dostoyevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 938

I. Early History--Kievan Russia

1. Varangians and Eastern Slavs In A.D. 862, warrior traders, related to the Vikings, and known as **Varangians** (vah-RAN-jee-ahns), received an invitation from the people of Novgorod (NAHV-gah-raht, a city 200 km south of present day St. Petersburg) to rule their area.

Prince Rurik (ROOR-ik) accepted, establishing a lineage which ruled Russia for some 700 years. His successor Oleg took over Kiev which became the center of Rus (another name for Varangian) rule.



During this period, loosely allied city-states gathered under the leadership of the Prince of Kiev (KEE-ef). A class society developed, comprised of princes, **boyars** (boo-YAHR, aristocracy), free peasants and slaves.

2. Vladimir I (vlah-DEE-mir, @956-1015) This great-grandson of Rurik, an outstanding military leader, ruled Kiev from 980-1015. Under his leadership, Eastern Orthodox Christianity became the official religion of Russia.

a. Russian Orthodox Eastern Christianity

Tradition relates that Vladimir had spiritual yearnings but did not know which faith to embrace. In 987, he sent envoys to check out various religions. They rejected Islam because of prohibitions against wine, a drink considered by Vladimir the "chief pleasure of the Russians." Christianity in Germany and Rome, though appealing, lacked services filled with sufficient beauty. On coming home via Constantinople, the envoys stopped at the Eastern Orthodox Cathedral of Hagia Sophia.



They reported, "We did not know whether this was heaven or earth. We never saw such splendor or beauty. We cannot tell you what it was like; except that we are sure that God dwells there among men, and that this is the best form of worship. The beauty is unforgettable."

Vladimir, won over by their findings, was baptized in the Orthodox faith, along with his subjects, thus beginning the long linkage of Orthodoxy with Russia.

b. Early Impact of Orthodox Eastern Christianity Changes brought by introduction of the Orthodox Eastern faith include:

(1) Byzantine culture Priests from Constantinople introduced use of the Cyrillic (suh-RIL-lik) alphabet, a creation of two Byzantine missionaries, St. Cyril (SIR-ahl) and St. Methodius (mah-THOH-dee-ahs). Many consider the translation of the four gospels by these two saints into the Slavic language (known today as Old Church Slavonic) to be the sole reason for the creation of a new alphabet.

(2) Schools In addition to religious studies, reading and writing flourished in schools opened for sons of boyars and priests. Early Russian literature developed in these institutions.

(3) Arts Domed roofed stone churches, mosaics and icons entered the culture. Distinct Russian adaptations (onion-shaped domes) soon became commonplace.

(4) Power in the ruler Since in Orthodoxy, all power comes from God, to disobey the ruler--God's elected one--was to sin. The ruler's power thus received divine approval.



The church also began to give Kievan Russians a national identity. Their shared Orthodox Christian belief and practice would provide support and stability for the Russian peoples during the upheavals, strife and stability of centuries to come.

3. Iaroslav the Wise (yuh-ruh-SLUHF, ruled from 1036-1054) One of Vladimir's 12 sons, Iaroslav, contributed to the cultural development of Russia. His own thirst for education prompted establishment of a large library at Kiev. Under Iaroslav, Byzantine scholars translated Greek classics into Russian. Trade schools in masonry, pottery and shipbuilding came into being. Iaroslav also was responsible for the first legal code which combined Slavic custom with Roman law.

4. Decline With Iaroslav's death, Kievan Russian divided into five principalities--one for each of his sons. Ensuing civil war amongst these principalities weakened the government of Kiev. Further deterioration occurred with the fall of Constantinople to Crusaders (A.D. 1204), hindering Byzantine trade. Nomad attacks against Russian merchant fleets also inhibited trade and Kievan economic/political development.

II. Mongol Rule

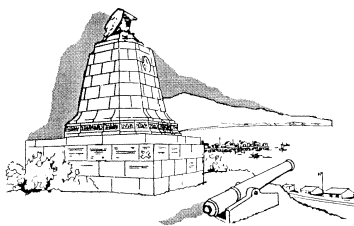
1. Mongol Invasion In the early 1200s, Mongol invaders (nomad warriors from central Asia)--under Genghis Khan and his grandson Batu Khan--conquered much of Kievan Rus. In a brutal and terrifying manner, Kiev--at the time an equal of Paris with its 80,000 people--was looted and burned. Barely 200 structures remained standing.



Mongol rule over Russia lasted almost 250 years (@1240-1480). Though Russians were allowed to keep their language and customs, learning and craftsmanship declined. The Eastern Orthodox Church gained in prestige, fostering strong nationalist feelings, but turned increasingly inward. Ritual and ceremony, rather than behavior, became primary.

In addition, the Russian people became more suspicious of foreign ideas and ways. Mongol isolation kept the European Renaissance from making headway.

Moscow gradually became the chief city-state. In 1380, Dimitri Donskoy, with an army of 150,000 men, defeated Mongol hordes, though half his soldiers were killed.



Dimitri replaced wooden and earthen walls surrounding Moscow with a kremlin (KREM-lin), or fortress, made of stone. This victory temporarily interrupted Mongol rule.

2. Ivan III, the Great (1462-1505) Founded the second Russian state. Through his marriage to Zoe (Sophia), a niece of the Byzantine emperor, he forged great personal power. Ivan III assumed the title of autocrat, with complete power over his subjects. He also ascribed to himself the name tzar (zahr)--a ruler who owes allegiance to no one. By 1480, he warned the

dispersed Mongols to leave his peoples alone and effectively eliminated their power.

Under Ivan III, ties between the Orthodox Eastern Church and tzar also were strengthened. Moscow became the "Third Rome" since Rome early on fell to corruption and the second Rome (Constantinople) was conquered by Turkish armies (1453).

3. Ivan IV, the Dread (reigned from 1533-1584)

During the first 27 years of Ivan IV's reign, his policies won the love of the Russian people.



However, after the death of his wife, who was a member of the Romanov (ROH-mah-nohf) family, he turned into an unpredictable, tyrannical leader. Ivan IV established a standing army and introduced the secret police.

4. Time of Troubles (1598-1613) The harsh ruling Boris Godunov (GOD-enohf, 1552-1605), a wealthy nobleman elected tzar after no male heir was born to Ivan IV's son, brought to an end the Rurick dynasty. Famine, plague, civil unrest (including an uprising by peasants and Cossacks), and the capture of Moscow by Polish and Lithuanian forces were indicative of the societal chaos during this time of troubles.

III. Romanov Dynasty

1. Mikhail Romanov (mi-khi-EEL, ruled from 1613-1645)

In 1612, the Russian peoples--boyars, Cossacks, priests and peasants--rallied against Polish invaders of Moscow. A gathered assembly of nobles elected Mikhail Romanov, a relative of Ivan IV's wife, as tzar, establishing a dynasty which lasted for more than 300 years (until 1917). Tzar Mikhail and his son Alexis I restored law and order to the Russian state. Under their leadership, peasants became serfs--bound to the land with no legal rights.

2. Peter the Great (ruled 1689-1725) An opening to the West, begun under Vladimir I and Iaroslav the Wise, reemerged with Peter I's becoming tzar. Eight years into his reign, Peter visited Western Europe for 18 months. Under an assumed name, in the disguise of a sailor, he worked in shipyards of Holland and England, learning map making, navigation and gunnery. On his return, Peter determined to make Russia a modern nation.

a. Reforms Peter I introduced Western culture, technology, military methods and economic policy.

He reduced the power of the Russian Orthodox Church, incorporating it into the administrative infrastructure of the country. A Holy Governing Synod ran church affairs rather than a patriarch.

Peter I desired to free his people from "Asiatic customs." Consequently, nobles cut off their long beards, educated their sons prior to marriage, and learned to speak French or German. For women, restrictions such as seclusion and wearing of veils in public were abandoned.



b. Foreign policy Procuring warm-water ports became a focus of foreign policy. The Great Northern War of 1700-1721 extended Russia's territory along the Baltic coast, including Estonia and Latvia.

c. St. Petersburg Desiring to create a Russian "window to Europe," Peter I assigned peasants to build a city, patterned after some of the beautiful baroque capitals of Europe. At times cruel and overbearing, Peter I's leadership oversaw the building of St. Petersburg, a city where both Western and Russian culture merged. Many peasant workers died in the construction process, often the result of accident, disease and lack of food.

3. Catherine the Great (Ruled 1762-1796) The most prominent non-Romanov ruler in a 75-year period following Peter the Great was Catherine.

The princess, originally named Sophia, came from a small German state. She became wife of Tzar Peter III, a grandson of Peter the Great. Sophia converted to the Orthodox Eastern faith, mastered Russian, and changed her name to Catherine. Catherine, with the help of lover Grigory Orlov and others, deposed Peter III and took the throne.



a. Expansion Admiring Peter the Great, Catherine followed his expansionist policies. In the south, she warred against the Ottoman Turks. In the west, she partitioned Poland along with Austria and Prussia. The Ukraine became part of Russia as well. A government policy of Russification, whereby conquered peoples were forced to adapt to Russian ways and language, became official government policy.

b. General Alexander Suvorov (ah-leh-KSAHN-dehr soo-VOH-rof, 1729-1800) One of the Russian army leaders who led conflicts against the Turks, and who established Russian control in the **Crimea** (kri-MEE-ah, peninsula between the Black Sea and Sea of Azov) was General Suvorov.

In addition to his exploits under Catherine, Suvorov led 18,000 Russians and 44,000 Austrians to drive out the French from northern Italy in 1789-1790. The forced retreat he led in 1799-1800 *"has been considered one of the great feats of military history."* Suvorov, who died shortly after at the age of 70, though an eccentric personality, used speed, push, and psychological rapport with soldiers, to enable him to be *"regarded as the ablest military commander Russia ever produced..."* (Riasanovsky, p. 275).

4. Tzar Alexander I (1777-1825) Catherine's son Alexander came to leadership in 1801, instituting several reforms. Napoleon's invasion of Russia, however, cut short implementation of his efforts to curb societal abuse.

5. Nicholas I, The Iron Tzar (1825-1855)

Alexander's younger brother Nicholas succeeded him in 1825.

A December revolt (The Decembrist Uprising) forced Nicholas I to react by clamping down on personal freedoms and individual thought. Powers of the secret police expanded. Only one religion--Orthodox Eastern Christianity--could be practiced. Siberian exile became commonplace for dissenters. Though censorship was severe, still classic authors--Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov and Gorky--found ways to indirectly criticize the tzarist system.

Nicholas continued the dream of his brother, a cathedral to celebrate the 1812 victory over Napoleon. After choosing a site next to a wall of the kremlin, and tearing down a church, convent and other buildings, a cathedral of five domes began to take shape. The cross on top of the highest dome stood 320 feet high. Ten thousand people could stand within the structure.



After more than 50 years of construction, the Cathedral of Our Savior was consecrated in 1883. For the occasion, Tchaikovsky composed his famous 1812 Overture. Sadly, after the Communist revolution, the cathedral's dean was imprisoned, archpriest executed, and the building blown up. Rebuilt after the Soviet collapse, the Cathedral now attracts faithful and tourist alike.

6. Alexander II (ruled 1855-1881) Coming into power after his father died, Alexander inherited the Russian defeat in the Crimean War. Loss of 250,000 soldiers

due to lack of food and logistics, plus liberalizing events in other parts of Europe, led Alexander to push for reform. His Emancipation Edict abolished serfdom. Censorship of books, newspapers and magazines ended. Court, industry and military changes took place. Expansion also occurred to the east, with Central Asia, China territories, and frontiers near Afghanistan and Iran becoming Russian.

Despite reorganization and societal improvement, unrest continued. After seven attempts on his life, Alexander died during the explosion of a terrorist bomb in 1881.

7. Repression under Alexander III (1845-1895)

In reaction to his father's assassination, Alexander III emphasized Russification, press censorship, increased secret police powers and Slavophile leanings.



Under his rule, Jewish peoples especially became objects of persecution. Pogroms (pah-GRUM [poh-GRUM], Russian for devastation) were carried out in which Jewish citizens were murdered and their homes burned. Between 1881 and World War I, some 2 million Jewish people fled, some to Palestine, many more to the United States.

IV. Civil War

1. Tzar Nicholas II (ruled 1894-1917) Though a good family man, possessed with charm and intelligence, during the latter part of his rule Nicholas II was out of touch with the social and economic conditions facing Russia.

a. Expansion and unrest In the first decade of Nicholas II's leadership, industrial expansion doubled within the country, bringing economic growth but also worker unrest. Completion of the Trans-Siberian

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Railroad in 1903 led to confrontation with Japan, an eight-month war which Russia lost.

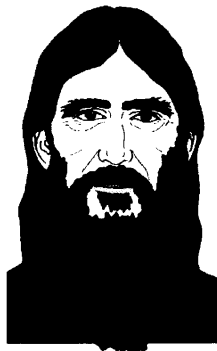
b. Bloody Sunday Workers of St. Petersburg, their wives and children took to the streets on a Sunday morning in January 1905. Their purpose was to voice concern for better working conditions and government reform.

Nicholas ordered soldiers to fire on the masses, wounding hundreds. Around the country, workers formed soviets (Russian for "councils") to organize mass strikes. The country soon came to a standstill.



c. Reform Forced to bring about change, the tzar established an assembly called the Duma (DOO-muh). Promises of land for the 12 million peasants surfaced. Such government assurances however, materialized only for a third of those petitioning to obtain land. The Duma, undermined by Nicholas and without any real power, proved ineffective.

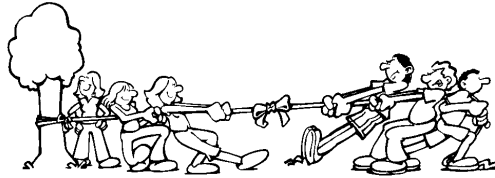
d. World War I Russian unpreparedness saw millions of soldiers killed, wounded or taken prisoner during World War I. Shortages at home hindered the cause. While Nicholas went to the front, he left the government in the hands of his wife Alexandra and



Gregory Rasputin (ras-PYOO-tuhn), a wandering holy man. On 8 March 1917, a food riot occurred in Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg--changed because of World War I anti-German sentiment). Termed the February Revolution (due to Julian/Gregorian calendar fluctuations), the accompanying general strike led to the abdication of Tzar Nicholas II. Romanov rule ended when Nicholas and his family were placed under arrest.

2. Vladimir Lenin (VLAD-ah-mir LEN-in, 1870-1924)

a. Communist texts Two German revolutionaries, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, originally developed communist theory. The Communist Manifesto (1848) and Das Kapital (1883) outlined their philosophic approach. Lenin's article What Is To Be Done? (1902) detailed a pragmatic plan of action for Communist takeover.



b. Communist theory--class struggle Karl Marx saw history as a continuous struggle between the "haves" and "have nots" (exploited slaves, serfs, and laborers).

The final, projected struggle would take place between capitalists (the "haves") and workers (proletariat, proh-luh-TAYR-ee-uht). Workers would win, and establish a "dictatorship of the proletariat." Class distinctions would die and the perfect system (communism) emplaced. Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin advocated a strong, disciplined party--the vanguard of the proletariat--to lead the working class to revolution.

c. October Revolution On 6 November 1917, Lenin's revolutionary party (Bolsheviks, BOHL-shuh-veeks) called a strike, staged a coup, and took power. Once in control, they changed their name to communists. This event is called the October Revolution due to calendar differences. Tzar Nicholas and his family were executed in July, 1918.

d. Civil War Three years of civil war ensued after Communists came to power. The Red Guards (Communists) faced White army forces, made up of former army officers, Tzar supporters, landowners and opposing political parties. Though Great Britain, France, Japan and the United States supported the Whites, Communists won the conflict.



e. USSR Lenin became the head of both the government and the Communist Party (the Political Bureau [Politburo]).

In January 1923, he changed the name of the country to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) or Soviet Union.

V. Communist Rule--Pre-World War II



Joseph Stalin (STAHL-uhn, 1879-1953)
Born Joseph Djugashvili, Stalin was the son of a former Georgian serf. When his mother was widowed in 1890, she sent her son to a church school, with the intent that he become a priest. While in seminary, Stalin joined a secret Marxist debating society and was expelled from the theological school. He then lived an underground existence, planning strikes and riots.

a. Lenin's successor After Lenin's death in 1924, a three-year struggle for power occurred between Stalin and Leon Trotsky (TRAHT-skee, 1879-1940).

These two associates of Lenin were key participants in the revolution. Trotsky advocated a world-wide revolution of workers to enable the underdeveloped Communist Russia to succeed. Stalin, on the other hand, saw world revolution only after Communism was made strong in Russia. Through shrewd political maneuvering, Stalin gained party control, expelled Trotsky and sent him into exile. Agents of Stalin reportedly murdered Trotsky in Mexico in 1940.

b. Central planning Under a system of five-year plans, Stalin industrialized the state and collectivized Soviet agriculture. Small farms merged into huge collectives. Famine ensued, with estimates of up to 10 million people dying.

c. Purges From 1935-1941, an era known as the "Great Terror," Stalin's secret police arrested, tortured, imprisoned, deported or executed millions of people considered "enemies of the state." Even old Bolsheviks and military leaders came under Stalin's wrath. A police state, with forced labor/concentration camps (archipelagos--regions cut off from the rest of the world but with its own communications system) flourished.



VI. World War II

1. Nonaggression Pact In 1939, Stalin and Hitler signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop nonaggression agreement, whereby Hitler could invade Poland, unhindered by Russia. Once German forces occupied Poland, secret clauses in the agreement enabled Russia to partition half of Poland. Stalin then moved to gain more land (the Baltic Republics, Moldovia and parts of Finland) to expand interests and create a buffer zone between the Soviet Union and Germany.

2. Great Patriotic War

Contrary to terms of the Nonaggression Pact, Germany invaded Russia in 1941.



Stalin marshaled the people behind him to face Hitler's armies. He led a nationalist revival by putting aside slogans of class struggle, muffling anti-religious propaganda, restoring the Eastern Orthodox patriarchate, and encouraging faithful church attendees to join the defense of their country.

a. Leningrad (St. Petersburg) From August 1941 to January 1944, German forces besieged Leningrad. Due to excessively harsh winters, nearly one million Russians died in the resulting cold or starvation.

b. Stalingrad In 1942, Germans captured the city of Stalingrad (current Volgograd) reducing it to rubble. Led by the Marshal of the Soviet Union, **General Georgii Zhukov** (ZHOO-kuhf), in February 1943 the Red Army encircled German forces, destroyed them and recaptured Stalingrad. Another Soviet victory during the Battle of Kursk in July 1943 gave strategic drive to the Red Army, enabling them to take initiative for the rest of the war.



Though estimates vary, some 18-26 million Soviet citizens died as a direct result of World War II.

VII. Communist Rule--Post World War II

1. Cold War Russia emerged from World War II as a superpower.

Stalin, desiring to spread communist practice and protect Soviet borders from future invasions, continued to occupy Eastern European countries in which Russia had fought. These satellite states became part of the Soviet bloc of nations. Antagonism arose between the Soviets and Western nations (the Cold War). The **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, formed in 1949, sought mutual defense for the United States, Canada and 10 Western European nations.

2. Nikita Khrushchev (ni-KEE-tah kroosh-CHOF, 1894-1971) Taking leadership of the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, Khrushchev oversaw the formation of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (**Warsaw Pact**) which arose in response to NATO and West Germany's formal entry into NATO in 1955.

In 1956, Khrushchev denounced Stalin in a "secret speech." Some political prisoners were released as a result. This liberalization led, in part, to a popular revolt in Hungary on 23 October 1956. The Red Army invaded and brutally suppressed this uprising.



Khrushchev's rule alternated between policies of peaceful coexistence and threats. The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis resulted when President Kennedy sought to prevent deployment of further Soviet missiles in Cuba. Failed agricultural and political reform, in addition to the missile crisis in Cuba, led to Khrushchev's removal from office in 1964.



3. Leonid Brezhnev (BREZH-nef, 1906-1982) Taking Khrushchev's place in 1964, Brezhnev gave high priority to defense and military power. The "Brezhnev doctrine," used in part to justify the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968, bound socialist states together militarily. During this era, Soviets sought to influence third world liberation movements in Vietnam, Nigeria and central Africa, Somalia, Ethiopia, Angola and Afghanistan. The policy of "détente" or relaxing of tensions through negotiation and discussion, also came about under Brezhnev.

VIII. Rise of the Russian Federation

1. Mikhail Gorbachev (GOHR-buh-chof, 1931-) Prior to Gorbachev's taking party control in 1985, the politburo chose two elderly successors for Brezhnev. Both Yuri Andropov (an-DROH-pov) and Konstantin Chernenko (CHERN-yen-koh) died in office after serving only short periods of time.

a. Reforms In 1986 Gorbachev initiated many reforms to boost the economy and create a better domestic and international climate. Some of these reforms included:

(1) Perestroika (restructuring) Borrowed from capitalism, Gorbachev sought to restructure the economy so production would focus on what people desired to consume.

(2) Glasnost (openness)

Rather than secretive lying within the government, more free channels of expression, movement and openness were fostered.



(3) Demokratizatsia (democratization)

Gorbachev advocated multi-candidate elections, effectively ending one-party rule.

b. Chernobyl (cher-NOH-buhl) A 1986 disaster at a nuclear plant in the Ukraine brought a setback to Soviet nuclear energy programs. The accident, which has repercussions to this day, released radioactive material in the atmosphere of Western Europe as well as Russia. This environmental disaster raised an alarm to both supporters and opponents of nuclear energy.

c. Non-intervention Revoking the Brezhnev doctrine, no longer would the Soviet Union interfere militarily with East European affairs. As a result, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Romania, Poland and Hungary all overthrew their communist leaders.

d. Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Soviet force reductions, reduced weaponry in Soviet ally states, and verification measures all became part of the CFE agreement, signed in Paris on 19 November 1990. Along with President Bush, Gorbachev signed the START Treaty in 1991, which reduced strategic nuclear arsenals by 30 percent.



2. Fall of Communism

a. Independence overtures by Soviet republics

In 1990-1991, leaders of several Soviet republics began to assert greater self-rule. Some withheld taxes. Others declared that their laws overrode those of the Soviet Union. Boris Yeltsin, elected president of the Russian Republic in June 1991, advocated decentralized

power--including that addressing legal matters. Yeltsin backed greater self-determination for the many dispersed Soviet republics.

b. Gorbachev's loss of popularity By 1991, a dismal economic picture undermined Gorbachev's popularity. Boris Yeltsin and others criticized him for the slow pace of his reforms. Hard-line Communists berated him for advocating too many changes.

c. Coup In August, 1991, high-ranking Communist Party Soviet Union (CPSU) officials attempted a coup, holding Gorbachev prisoner. Yeltsin denounced the rebellion, called for a strike, and led some 50,000 demonstrators near the Russian Parliament. The military, in refusing to use force against the demonstrators, effectively ended the coup.



On 21 August, Gorbachev was restored to the presidency, though he resigned as leader of the Communist Party three days later. By 29 August, Parliament voted to cease all Communist Party activities.

d. Gorbachev's resignation and Soviet Union breakup On 25 December 1991, Gorbachev resigned as president of the USSR. That same month, Boris Yeltsin, meeting in Minsk with the Belarussian chairman of Parliament (Stanislav Shushkevich) and the Ukrainian president (Leonid Kravchuk), signed the Belavezha Accords, which officially dissolved the Soviet Union (26 Dec 1991).

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), made up of all the former Soviet republics except the Baltic states, became a venue for mutual discussion and cooperation.

3. The Russian Federation

a. Economic reform In January 1992, Russia eliminated state subsidies for goods and services, allowing prices for common merchandise to soar. Later in the year, Yeltsin and President Bush agreed to massive arms reductions.



b. Privatization Medium and large state-owned corporations were privatized in 1993. Conservatives and former communists led an impeachment drive against Yeltsin, which he narrowly survived.

c. Parliament unrest



Calling for early elections in September 1993, Yeltsin dissolved Parliament. Parliament in turn deposed Yeltsin. Anti-Yeltsin legislators barricaded themselves in the Parliament building. On 3 October, anti-Yeltsin forces rampaged through Moscow and barricaded themselves in the Parliament building. Yeltsin ordered tanks to fire on Parliament. Estimates vary, but close to 140 people were killed and another 150 arrested in the ensuing mayhem.

d. Constitutional reform The 12 December 1993 elections supported Yeltsin-led constitutional reform. Two houses of a new Russian Parliament were elected--the Federation Council (the upper house) and the State Duma (a 450-member lower house). A strong presidential republic resulted.

e. Chechnya (chech-NYAH) Government forces set out to quell disturbances in the breakaway republic of Chechnya in December 1994. After heavy fighting, Grozny, the capital, fell in February 1995. On 14 August 1996, rebels embarrassed the military by

retaking Grozny. Military leader Alexander Lebed, given broad powers to terminate the conflict by President Yeltsin, negotiated an end to the war on 31 August. By January 1997, the last Russian soldiers left Chechnya.



f. Yeltsin ups and downs

Elections on 17 December 1995 saw Communist gains in parliament. Though in poor health, Yeltsin won a presidential runoff election. On 17 October 1996, he dismissed Alexander Lebed for insubordination. Currently (Aug 1998), Lebed serves as a Siberian province leader. Yeltsin survived a 5 November 1996 quintuple-bypass heart surgery. With revitalized health, Yelstin revamped his cabinet in March of 1997.

On 27 May 1997, Russia and NATO signed a "Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security," paving the way for NATO to admit countries in transition (former Eastern European countries). The "Founding Act" outlined means for frequent Russia/NATO consultation and coordination. It also specified that NATO would not deploy nuclear weapons to new member territories.



"Never take the easy way out."

Vocabulary List: Historical Overview

Bolsheviks (BOHL-shuh-veeks) Lenin's revolutionary party.
Changed to Communists after the civil war

Boyar (boo-YAHR) Aristocracy class

Brezhnev, Leonid (BREZH-nef, 1906-1982) Khrushchev's successor.
Authored "Brezhnev doctrine" which bound socialist states together and justified Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Initiated detente, a relaxing of East-West tensions through negotiation and discussion.

Byzantine (BIZ-ahn-teen) Relating to the Eastern Roman Empire,
A.D. 476-1453

Catherine the Great (ruled 1762-1796) Wife of Peter III, she converted to Eastern Orthodoxy, expanded the empire, implemented Russification on captured subjects, and warred against the Ottoman Turks.

Chechnya (chech-NYAH) Area where Russian government forces entered to quell disturbances in December 1994. In Jan 1997, the last Russian soldiers finally left Chechnya.

Chernobyl (cher-NOH-buhl) 1986 nuclear disaster at this Ukraine powerplant set back nuclear energy programs in the Soviet Union.

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) All of the former Soviet republics except the Baltic states, who presently form an association for mutual discussion and cooperation.

Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Force reductions, weaponry in ally states and verification measures as part of an agreement signed in Paris in November 1990.

Crimea (kri-MEE-ah) Peninsula in Russia between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

Cyrillic (suh-RIL-lik) Alphabet introduced by St. Cyril (SIR-ahl) and St. Methodius (mah-THOH-dee-ahs) into Balkan society. Eventually adopted by Russia

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Duma (DOO-muh) Assembly established by Nicholas II to bring about legislative reform.

Glasnost Openness. Free channels of expression, movement and honesty became more tolerated in Soviet government under Gorbachev.

Godunov, Boris (GOD-enohf, 1552-1605) Harsh ruler during the "Time of Troubles" (famine, plague and unrest)

Gorbachev, Mikhail (GOHR-buh-chof, 1931 -) Reform-minded leader who came into power in 1985 in Russia. Perestroika and Glasnost were two key programs he introduced.

Great Patriotic War Stalin inspired nationalism during World War II to enable Russian people to endure and be victorious in the conflict.

Iaroslav the Wise (yuh-ruh-SLUHF, ruled 1036-1054) Ruler who contributed greatly to Russian cultural development. Responsible for the first legal code

Ivan IV, the Dread (ruled 1533-1584) Married to a Romanov (ROH-mah-nohf), he became unpredictable and tyrannical after his wife died.

Ivan III, the Great (1462-1505) Assumed title of tzar and autocrat in Russia. Effectively eliminated Mongol domination and strengthened ties between Orthodox Eastern Christianity and the tzar

Khrushchev, Nikita (ni-KEE-tah kroosh-CHOF, 1894-1971) Soviet leader who denounced Stalin in a secret speech, oversaw the Cuban missile crisis, and ruled with an alternating policy of coexistence and threat.

Kremlin (KREM-lin) Fortress made of stone

Lebed, Alexander General who was victorious in Chechnya for the Russian forces. Dismissed by Yeltsin, he currently serves as a Siberian province leader.

Lenin, Vladimir (VLAD-ah-mir LEN-in, 1870-1924) Author of What is to be Done?, a pragmatic article on the Communist takeover. Led the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution. Became first Communist Party head in Russia.

Mongol Nomad warriors from central Asia who conquered Russia
1240-1480

Nicholas I, the Iron Tzar (1825-1855) A December revolt caused him to clamp down on freedoms and individual thought. Secret police and Siberian camps became common.

Nicholas II (ruled 1894-1917) Tzar who, though a good family man, was out of touch with domestic issues in the latter part of his rule.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Organization formed in 1949 to seek mutual defense for the United States, Canada and 10 Western nations against the Soviet bloc.

Perestroika Restructuring. Production focused on what people desired to consume, not on state mandated items alone.

Peter the Great (ruled 1689-1725) Western looking tzar who determined to make Russia a Western nation. He reduced the power of the Orthodox Church, expanded the country to warm water ports, and established St. Petersburg, the "window to Europe."

Pogrom (pah-GRUM) Russian devastation which murdered Jewish citizens and burned their homes

Politburo Political Bureau--the Communist Party and Russian Government under Communism

Proletariat (proh-luh-TAYR-ee-uht) Workers, the "have nots" in Communist theory

Rasputin, Gregory (ras-PYOO-tuhn) Wandering holy man who shared Russian power with Nicholas II's wife Alexandra while Nicholas was on the Front.

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Romanov, Mikhail (mi-khi-EEL ROH-mah-nohf, ruled 1613-1645)
Restored law and order to Russian state, and established a dynasty lasting over 300 years. Serfs--peasants with no rights--came into being under his rule.

Rurik (ROOR-ik) Varangian prince who began rule over Kievan Russia in A.D. 862

Soviets Russian word for councils

Stalin, Joseph (STAHL-uhn, 1879-1953) Son of former serf, theological student turned Marxist who led Russia for nearly 30 years.

Suvorov, Alexander (ah-leh-KSAHN-dehr soo-VOH-rof, 1729-1800)
Regarded as the ablest military commander Russia ever produced for his leading of the forced retreat in 1799-1800 and other exploits.

Trotsky, Leon (TRAHT-skee, 1879-1940) Associate of Lenin who believed all underdeveloped lands needed a Communist revolution. Only then would the Russian revolution succeed. Killed by Stalin's people in Mexico in 1940.

Tzar (zahr) Russian ruler who owes allegiance to no one

Varangians (vah-RAN-jee-ahns) Early warrior traders, related to the Vikings, who in A.D. 862 received an invitation from Novgorod to rule their area. Rus is another name for Varangian

Vladimir I (vlah-DEE-mir, @956-1015) Grandson of Rurik who ruled Kiev from 980-1015. Under Vladimir, Russia adopted Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

Warsaw Pact Warsaw Treaty Organization which arose in response to NATO. Consisted of Russian satellite nations

Yeltsin, Boris Russia's first president after the fall of Communism.

Zhukov, Georgii (ZHOO-kuhf) General and Marshal of the Soviet Union who led the Soviet armies to victory at Stalingrad and Kursk, giving them the initiative for the remainder of the war.

Review Quiz: Historical Overview



Part 1--Multiple Choice Place the letter of the most correct response in the space provided.

1. _____ Prince Vladimir I was won over by Eastern Orthodoxy in part because of its
 - a. emphasis given to right doctrine.
 - b. splendor and beauty of worship.
 - c. method of baptism.
2. _____ One impact of Eastern Orthodox Christianity on early Russian leadership was to
 - a. emphasize the importance of free choice and independence of the masses.
 - b. give divine approval to a legitimate ruler's position.
 - c. popularize long beards as this was the style of the patriarchs.
3. _____ The first Russian ruler to ascribe to himself the name tzar (a ruler who owes allegiance to no one) was
 - a. Iaroslav the Wise.
 - b. Ivan the Great.
 - c. Boris Godunov.
4. _____ The tzar who reopened Russia to the West, and established a Russian city designed to be a "window to Europe" was
 - a. Vladimir I.
 - b. Peter the Great.
 - c. Catherine the Great.

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5. _____ Under _____, who originally was a German princess, Russification--where subjected peoples were forced to adopt the Russian language--became a policy.

- a. Zoe, wife of Ivan the Great
- b. Catherine the Great
- c. Raisa Gorbachev

6. _____ The Russian army leader, regarded by some as the "ablest military commander Russia ever produced" is

- a. General Alexander Suvorov.
- b. General Alexander Lebed.
- c. General Georgii Zhukov.

7. _____ Under Nicholas I, the Iron Tzar,

- a. the Russian iron ore industry tripled.
- b. personal freedoms and individual thought were suppressed.
- c. vitamin and mineral deficiencies in the Russian diet were supplemented by state-run pharmacies.

8. _____ One result of the completion of the Trans-Siberian railroad in 1903 was

- a. the Russian war with Japan, which Russia lost.
- b. increased dialogue and understanding between China and Russia.
- c. a boost to the Russian economy because of American dollars paid for train tickets by globetrotting turn-of-the-century college students.

9. _____ Two German revolutionaries who developed Communist theory were

- a. Marx and Engels.
- b. Trotsky and Stalin.
- c. Abbott and Costello.

10. _____ In Communist theory, another name for the workers who would eventually win over the "haves" is

- a. serfs.
- b. proletariat.
- c. capitalists.

11. _____ Leon Trotsky advocated a _____ revolution to enable the Communist experiment to succeed.
- a. Russian only
 - b. world-wide
 - c. Stalin led
12. _____ During the era known as the _____, Stalin's secret police purged, arrested, tortured, imprisoned, deported or executed millions considered "enemies of the state."
- a. Great Terror
 - b. Archipelago Distress
 - c. Time of Troubles
13. _____ In identifying World War II as a Great Patriotic War for Russia, Stalin treated the Russian Orthodox Church
- a. with increased censorship, suppression and heavy-handedness.
 - b. as a source for renewed national patriotism and pride.
 - c. to new onslaughts of anti-religious propaganda.
14. _____ Though estimates vary, how many Soviet citizens died as a result of World War II?
- a. Between 6-10 million
 - b. Between 10-18 million
 - c. Between 18-26 million
15. _____ The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), established in 1949, sought defense for
- a. Soviet bloc nations against the West.
 - b. the U.S., Canada and 10 Western nations against the Soviet bloc.
 - c. all peoples north of the 50 degree latitude region (the Cold War Zone).
16. _____ What two events occurred under Nikita Khrushchev's rule?
- a. Cuban Missile Crisis and "secret speech" denouncing Stalin oppression
 - b. Detente and the occupation of Czechoslovakia
 - c. Establishment of both the Warsaw Pact and NATO

Unit 2: Historical Overview

17. _____ Brezhnev's policy of détente sought to
- a. justify Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968.
 - b. influence liberation movements in Vietnam, Central Africa and Afghanistan.
 - c. relax tensions between Russia and the West through discussion and negotiation.
18. _____ Under Gorbachev's Perestroika (restructuring) government, he sought to
- a. create an atmosphere of openness and freedom of expression.
 - b. focus production on what products people wanted to buy.
 - c. limit the power of the Russian Orthodox priests of Moscow.
19. _____ The Commonwealth of Independent States is made up of
- a. all the former Soviet republics.
 - b. all the former Soviet republics except the Baltic states.
 - c. the current provinces of the Russian Federation.
20. _____ President Boris Yeltsin's rule in Russia could best be described as
- a. successfully developing a strong economy.
 - b. many ups and downs.
 - c. stable, encouraging little internal rebellion or unrest.



Part 2--Fill in the Blanks Fill in the blanks with the most correct word from the list that follows. Not all words listed will be used.

The (1) _____, warrior traders related to the Vikings, received an invitation to rule the people of Novgorod around A.D. 862. Prince (2) _____ accepted, establishing a lineage which ruled Russia for 700 years.

(3) _____ invaders, under leaders Genghis Khan and Batu Khan, conquered much of Kievan Rus in the 1200s.

The term (4) _____ is another word for a stone fortress. Peasants who are bound to the land with no legal rights are called (5) _____.

(6) _____ were organized and spontaneous persecutions of Russian Jewish citizens which took place especially under the rule of (7) _____.

The events of (8) _____ where Nicholas II ordered Russian soldiers to fire on mass protesters, brought Russia to a standstill in 1905.

The last of the Romanov rulers was Tzar (9) _____. This ruler established an assembly, the (10) _____ which was a noble idea yet became a legislative body which lacked real power.

Duma
Pogroms
Rurik
Alfred the Great

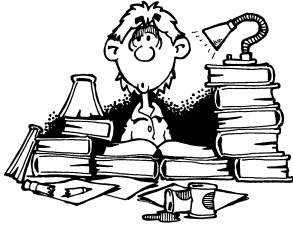
Alexander III
Kremlin
Serfs
Nicholas II

Varangians
Mongol
Bloody Sunday
Glasnost

Part 3--True/False Place a T or an F in the blank provided.



1. _____ Byzantine culture--that of the Eastern Roman Empire (476-1453)--was introduced in Russia by the Orthodox Eastern Church.
2. _____ Under Mongol rule, Russians kept their language and many customs, but turned increasingly inward, suspicious of foreign ideas and ways.
3. _____ Early in his reign, Peter the Great visited Western Europe, disguised as a sailor.
4. _____ The Crimea region stretches from the Caspian to the Aral Sea.
5. _____ Gregory Rasputin, a wandering holy man, held power in St. Petersburg, along with Nicholas II's wife Alexandra, while Nicholas was on the Front during World War I.
6. _____ Petrograd was the name used for St. Petersburg during World War I, due to anti-German sentiment.
7. _____ Friedrich Engels work What is to be Done?, detailed a pragmatic plan of action for Communist takeover in Russia.
8. _____ The original name of Lenin's revolutionary party was the Bolsheviks.
9. _____ During the Red Guard/White Army civil war in Russia after World War I, Great Britain, France, Japan and the United States supported the Red Guard.
10. _____ Joseph Stalin attended a theological seminary in his youth.



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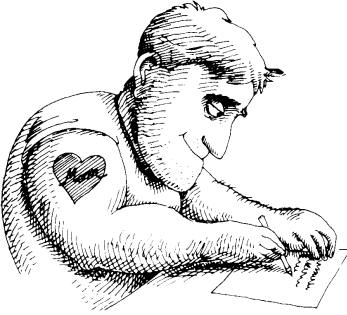
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